



NANTWICH RURAL DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT

of

the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the Year 1939.

by

O. H. BLACKLAY, M.D., F.R.C.S. Edin.,  
Temporary Medical Officer of Health.

To Which is Appended The Report of

JOHN S. TOWNLEY,

Sanitary Inspector and  
Cleansing Superintendent.

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## NANTWICH RURAL DISTRICT

### Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area

Area (in acres), 100,823.

Registrar General's estimate of resident population (middle of 1939) 25,210.

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1939) according to the rate books, 7,593.

Rateable value (1st April, 1939), £117,995.

Sum represented by a penny rate £474.

### Sanitary Staff.

Temporary Medical Officer of Health (part time), O.H. Blacklay M.D., F.R.C.S. (Edin.).

Sanitary Inspector (full time), John S. Townley.

Temporary Assistant Sanitary Inspector (full time), E.A. Baguley.

Sanitary Engineer and Surveyor (full time), H. Crabtree.

### Social Conditions

The social conditions remain unaltered. The residents of the district surrounding Crewe and Nantwich are employed in these towns, and in the remaining part the population find employment in agriculture, which is the chief industry of the district. Allied industries, in the form of milk factories and a whey products factory, are situated in the area. There is one clothing factory in the district, which employs female labour. Unemployment is by no means extensive and agriculture is still faced with its problem of shortage of labour; this can only be overcome by the provision of houses which can be let at rents that the agricultural workers can afford to pay.

### Vital Statistics.

	Total	Male	Female
Live Births (Legitimate)	365	192	173
(Illegitimate)	20	7	13

Birth rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population, 15.271

Stillbirths	16	10	6
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Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births 15.906.

Deaths	304	161	143
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Death rate per 1,000 of the resident population, 11.833.

Deaths from Puerperal Causes:-

There were no deaths from Puerperal causes.

Death rate of infants under one year of age.

All infants per 1,000 live births	49.220
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	44.041
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	100.000

Deaths from cancer (all ages)	36
Deaths from measles	nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	1



Particulars of any unusual or excessive mortality during the year which has received or requires comment - No comment necessary.

Causes of Death During the Year 1939.

Causes of Death	All Ages		Totals
	M.	F.	
Other digestive diseases	3	2	5
Acute and Chronic Nephritis	9	1	10
Congenital Debility & Premature Birth	5	10	15
Senility	5	8	13
Suicide		1	1
Other violence	10	6	16
Other defined diseases	11	6	17
Diarrhoea 2yrs. and over	1	1	2
Diabetes		4	4
Cerebral Haemorrhage	10	8	18
Heart Disease	59	51	110
Other Circulation Diseases	4	5	9
Bronchitis	4	5	9
Pneumonia (all forms)	5	4	9
Other respiratory diseases	2		2
Peptic Ulcer	1	1	2
Diarrhoea under 2 yrs.		1	1
Appendicitis	3		3
Cirrhosis of Liver	1		1
Influenza	5	2	7
Encepholitis lethargica	1	2	3
Tuberculosis of the Respiratory System	3	4	7
Other Tuberculosis	3	1	4
Cancer	16	20	36
Totals	161	143	304

Deaths

The "standardised" death rate (calculated from the Registrar General's comparability factor) for comparative purposes is 11.316.

The total number of deaths of infants under one year of age was 19 (6 males and 13 females), two of which were illegitimate.

There have been no causes of sickness or invalidity which have been specially noteworthy in this area during the year. The conditions of occupation and environments of the population are healthy.

Immunisation Against Diphtheria

The scheme of free immunisation of children against Diphtheria is still in operation and applications are dealt with as they arise. It is hoped that parents will continue to take advantage of this important service.

Laboratory Facilities

There have been no developments or changes owing to the war and the arrangements are set out here under:

Bacteriological specimens are examined by the Public Health Laboratory of the University of Manchester and the Evans Biological Institute.

Samples of milk are examined at the Chester Royal Infirmary Laboratory.

Water samples are submitted to Messrs. Melling & Arden, The County Analysts, Manchester.

#### Ambulance Facilities.

There is a motor ambulance at the Isolation Hospital for transport of infectious diseases and a motor ambulance is kept at Nantwich for the transport of non-infectious and accident cases.

The above ambulances are maintained by (1) the Nantwich Joint Hospital Board, of which the Rural District Council is a constituent authority; (2) by the Nantwich Urban and Rural District Councils jointly under agreement.

In addition to the above, six ambulances supplied by the County Council under the Air Raid Precautions Scheme are stationed within the area.

In my opinion the service is adequate.

#### Nursing Arrangements

Professional nursing in the homes of the people in the District is by District Nurses, employed by voluntary associations. Nurses are stationed at Acton, Audlem, Bunbury, Doddington, Cholmondeley, Willaston, Worleston, Burleydam, Stapeley and Shavington. These nurses act as midwives in their respective districts.

There is one registered but untrained midwife who practices in the district.

No special provision is made for the nursing of infectious cases in their own homes.

Nurses are employed by the County Council and are located in the Rural District; they exercise the duties of school nurses and health visitors to cases of tuberculosis.

#### Clinics and Treatment Centres.

The only existing centre of this type in the district is the Child Welfare Centre at Haslington. The Child Welfare Centre of Nantwich and Alsager are used by the residents in the vicinity of these places.

#### Hospitals.

There is a large Poor Law Hospital at Nantwich, which serves the Rural and Urban Districts of Nantwich and the Borough of Crewe, to which a temporary extension has been made providing accommodation for 210 beds, for use in the event of an emergency.

There is the Isolation Hospital at Worleston. This Hospital is capable of accommodating twenty adults and thirty children, and of treating three diseases at the same time.

There is a Cottage Hospital at Nantwich with accommodation for eighteen patients.

There is a small-pox hospital at Ravensmoor with room for six or at most eighteen patients.

In addition to these institutions there exists at Wrenbury



Hall near Nantwich, an agricultural and Industrial Colony for residential treatment of Tuberculosis cases ~~cap~~ able of some work. This institution was presented to the County Council shortly after the war by the British Red Cross Society and the St. John Ambulance Association.

#### Water Extensions Carried out during 1939.

The mains of the Oakhangar district of the Haslington Parish have been extended to give a supply of water *for industrial purposes.*

Owing to the billeting of troops at Crewe Hall, it has been found necessary to lay a new water main from "Stowfold", Weston Parish, to the Hall.

#### Sewerage and Drainage

Only short extensions of sewers to meet local housing development at Alpraham, Haslington and Wistaston, have been made.

#### Housing

Action under the Housing Acts have resulted in all houses which could not be rendered fit at reasonable expense, being scheduled for demolition, apart from several border line cases where owners had been advised to apply for grants under the Housing (Rural Workers) Acts. The total number of cases in which demolition orders have been served is 125.

Much progress had been made prior to the outbreak of war, in the reconstruction of houses under the Housing (Rural Workers) Acts and there was evidence that it would have continued.

Generally speaking the working class dwellings in this district are in good repair, although not of recent construction.

There is still a shortage of houses in many agricultural parishes, and it is very noticeable that the agricultural worker prefers a house of his own to living on the farm or in lodgings, and at the present time when labour is competitive it is my confirmed opinion that the first incentive to keep the agricultural worker on the land is to provide him with a respectable home to live in.

#### Rivers and Streams Pollution

Observation has shown that precautions taken in recent years have tended to a decrease in pollution and no action in this connection has been necessary during the year.

#### Closet Accommodation

There have been 26 voluntary conversions from conservancy system to water carriage, which leaves approximately 1,194 pails in the populous and closely built areas.

The Council have under consideration a Conversion Scheme for which purpose a survey has been made and estimates for the works are now being compiled.

### Public Cleansing

On the 1st January 1939, scavenging was carried out by direct labour in the following parishes, viz:- Willaston, Winstaston, Wybunbury, Rope, Shavington, Stapeley, Hough, Haslington, Basford, Weston and Chorlton.

The parishes of Audlem, Crewe Green, Stoke and Wardle were scavenged by contract.

### Sanitary Inspection of Area

The report of the Sanitary Inspector, which deals fully with this matter, is attached hereto.

### Shops and Offices

Periodical inspections have been made and no infringements found.

### Camping Sites

One licence has been issued in connection with one site for camping purposes, with respect to one caravan occupied by one person.

### Swimming Baths

There are no public or private swimming baths or pools in this area.

### Eradication of Bed Bugs

- (1) Number of houses found to be infested:-
  - (a) Council houses: Nil.
  - (b) Other Houses: Nil.Number of houses disinfested: Nil.
- (2) Method employed when cases do arise is the use of an insectide known as "Zaldecide".
- (3) Methods employed to ensure belongings of tenants free from vermin before removal to Council houses: Nil.
- (4) Disinfestation is carried out by Local Authority as required.
- (5) No measures were taken to educate tenants to prevent infestation or re-infestation after cleaning.

### Schools.

All schools in the area have a wholesome and adequate supply of water.

A survey of all schools has been made and as a result many improvements suggested have been carried out, e.g., flushing of urinals and paving of playgrounds.

Nine schools were closed on account of influenza, each for a period of two weeks.



### Inspection and Supervision of Food

There are 697 farms licensed under the Accredited Milk Scheme 1 attested herd, and 14 producers of Tuberculin Tested Milk.

The standard of cleanliness is found to be high and alteration and reconstruction of shippens is still progressing favourably, as is shown by the steady increase of Accredited producers.

Samples of milk are taken from retailers in the Rural District and these are tested for the presence of dirt and other extraneous matter.

Frequent inspections are made of three Pasteurisation plants in the district and samples are taken regularly and submitted for examination.

Slaughterhouses and butchers' shops are regularly visited and the businesses are found to be carried out under clean and wholesome conditions. All meat condemned was voluntarily surrendered. Under the Food and Drugs Act 1938 a survey of 33 slaughterhouses in the district was carried out following receipt of applications for renewal of licences, and as a result 3 applications were refused.

### Food and Drugs Acts

These Acts are administered by officials appointed by the County Council.

### Nutrition

No steps have been taken to increase knowledge on the above subject by this authority.

### Shell-fish

There are no shell-fish beds or layings in the district.

### Infectious Diseases

The total number of <sup>cases of</sup> infectious disease notified in the district was 113 as compared with 103 in 1938, and 104 for the year 1937

There were 17 cases of Scarlet Fever, a decrease of 17 cases on last year. Diphtheria cases numbered 19, showing a decrease of 16 on last year.

28 sputum specimens examined for the presence of Tubercle Baccilli and 5 were reported as positive.

36 specimens were examined for the presence of the Diphtheria Baccilli.

15 specimen faeces were examined for suspected paratyphoid but were proved negative.

35 cases of Tuberculosis were notified: 21 were "pulmonary" cases, and 14 "Non-Pulmonary" cases.



There have been 5 non-notified Tuberculosis deaths. The efficiency of notification of Tuberculosis in the area is satisfactory and no proceedings have been necessary for neglect to notify this disease.

Tuberculosis

New Cases and Mortality During 1939

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0		1						1
1			3	3				1
5		1	5	3				
15	2	6			1	1		
25		2						
35	2					1		1
45	4				1			
55	2				1			
65 & upwards	—	1	—	—	1	2	—	—
Totals	10	11	8	6	4	4		3

Total Cases, 35. Total Deaths, 11

There is no evidence of excessive incidence of mortality from any particular occupation in the area.

Prevention of Blindness.

No action has been taken by this authority.

Notifiable Diseases.

The following is a tabular statement of the cases of notifiable diseases which were reported during the year:-

Diseases	Cases Notified	Removed to Hospital	Deaths
Scarlet Fever	17	14	
Diphtheria	19	19	
Pneumonia	21		9
Puerperal Pyrexia	1		
Erysipelas	1		
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	2		
Whooping Cough	44		
Measles	9		

Cases of Infectious Disease Showing the Incidence of  
In Various Age Periods

	Under 1yr.	1 to 2yrs.	2 to 3yrs.	3 to 4yrs.	4 to 5yrs.	5 to 10yrs.	10 to 15yrs.	15 to 20yrs.	20 to 35yrs.	35 to 45yrs.	45 to 65yrs.	65 and over.	All Ages.
Scarlet Fever	1	1	1		3	7	1	3					17
Diphtheria					1	10	1	2	3			2	19
Pneumonia				1	1	2		1	4	4	5	3	21
Puerperal Pyrexia								1					1
Erysipelas									1				1
Measles			1				3						4
Whooping Cough	8	5	1	4	5	24	1			1			49
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Totals	10	6	4	5	10	43	6	7	8	5	5	5	114

The normal activities of my department have been considerably curtailed during the year owing to the necessary preparation of the Air Raid Precautions Scheme. The First Aid and Casualty Services have been organised to the limit of the facilities made available to this area under the County Air Raid Precautions Scheme.

My staff have spent much time in connection with the preparation for, and execution of, the Government Evacuation Scheme, the district of the Council being scheduled as a "Reception Area".

OLIVER H. BLACKLAY. M.D. F.R.C.S. Edin.

Temporary Medical Officer of Health.

Sanitary Inspector's Report.

To the Chairman and Members of the Nantwich Rural District Council.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my fifth Annual Report for the year ending December 31st, 1939.

Inspections

Housing Acts	505
Public Health Acts	375
Milk and Dairies (Consolidation) Act, 1915; the	
Milk and Dairies (amendment) Act, 1922; the	
Milk and Dairies Order, 1926.	312
	<u>1,192</u>

Infectious Diseases

The following cases of infectious disease have been investigated:-



Scarlet Fever	17
Diphtheria	19
Puerperal Pyrexia	1
Erysipelas	1
Tuberculosis	

Disinfection was carried out in each case and investigation entailed 56 visits.

#### Public Health Acts.

Statutory Notices served	13
Informal Notices served	120

#### Refuse Accommodation

In all parishes where scavenging is in operation ashbins are provided at all premises.

#### Connections to Sewers

Pail closets converted to water carriage	26
Number of pail closets in populous areas (approx.)	1,994

#### Scavenging

Eleven parishes are scavenged by direct labour with horse-drawn vehicles and four by contract.

The approximate number of ashbins and closet pails emptied are as follows:-

Ashbins (fortnightly)	3,688
Closet Pails (weekly)	2,300

No difficulties have been experienced in the disposal of nightsoil or dry refuse, suitable sites being available in all districts.

#### Anthrax

There have been 135 suspected cases notified, and of these 8 were confirmed, the remainder being withdrawn. Visits were paid to the infected premises to ensure proper disinfection and cremation of carcasses.

#### Swine Fever

One case was notified, and 12 contacts were slaughtered on the premises, two of which were found to be suffering from swine fever.

#### Offensive Trades

Only one offensive trade exists in this area - a tripe-boiling establishment. Frequent visits are paid and the place is kept in satisfactory condition.

#### Shops Act:

The shops in the area were frequently inspected and no infringements of the Act were found.

## Canal Boats

No applications were received for the registration of any canal boat. Twelve visits have been made to the canal and 4 boats were inspected. All were found to be free from infectious disease and no infringements were detected. The occupants were as follows:-

Men	4
Women	4
Children	5

## Housing Acts

During the year notices of "Time and Place" under Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936, have been served with respect to 14 houses. Demolition Orders have also been made with respect to 15 houses.

Under Section 9 of the Housing Act, 1936, 30 Statutory Notices were served with respect to 30 houses.

The following indicates the position at the end of the year in consequence of action under the Housing Acts:-

(1)	Houses demolished	32
(2)	Persons displaced under (1)	107
(3)	Number of dwelling houses made fit	195
(4)	Houses demolished in anticipation of formal action	10
(5)	Houses closed	5
(6)	Houses made fit as a result of informal action	159

In all cases where action has been taken under the Housing Act, 1936, the facilities for reconditioning cottages under the Housing (Rural Workers) Acts were brought to the notice of the owners.

## Inspection and Supervision of Food

### Milk Supply

The Administration of the Milk and Dairies (Consolidation) Act, 1915, the Milk and Dairies (Amendment) Act, 1922, and the Milk and Dairies Order, 1926.

The following samples were taken from retailers in the district and submitted to the "Minit Sediment" test, with the following results:-

Number of samples taken	32
" " " found to be clean	16
" " " found to be slightly contaminated	16

At the end of the year there were 1,285 farms on the register. Three hundred and twelve inspections have been made and 16 notices have been served under the Milk and Dairies Order, 1926. The compliance with notices served continues to be very satisfactory. There are now 697 "Accredited" producers in the area.

Twenty-one samples of pasteurised milk produced in the area



were taken, all of which complied with the standard.

Milk (Special Designations) Order, 1936.

The number of licences granted or renewed under the above Order are as follows:-

"Pasteurised"	3
"Tuberculin Tested" (Bottler's Licence)	2
"Tuberculin Tested" (Supplementary)	1
"Accredited" (Bottler's Licence)	2

Legal proceedings were successfully taken with respect to a contravention of Section 3 of the Milk and Dairies Amendment Act 1922., as substituted by section 10 of the Milk Act 1934., against a person for selling milk as Tuberculin Tested which was not entitled to that designation. The defendant was fined £5 and costs.

Slaughterhouses

Thirty-three applications for renewal of slaughterhouse licences under the Food and Drugs Act 1938, were received, and four of these had been registered premises. The results of a survey were reported to the Council and the applications by occupiers of three of the premises which were formerly registered were refused, and the right of appeal was not exercised in any of these cases.

Inspections of meat resulted in approximately 14,470lbs. being condemned as unfit for food of man.

Water Analysis

Two samples of well water have been taken and submitted to the County Analysts for examination and for an opinion as to the advisability of using it for domestic purposes.

Result of analysis:-

Both unsatisfactory chemically and bacteriologically.

Necessary action was taken in these cases

I am, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN S. TOWNLEY,

Sanitary Inspector.







